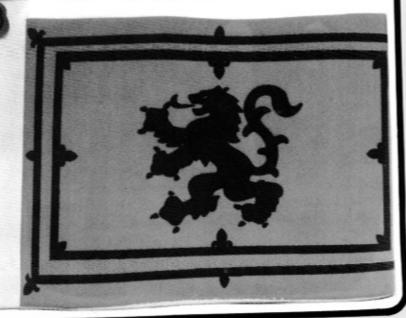
VOL. XXX No. 176 No. 4 2003

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Editor / Publisher DAVID M. SPAID

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Part three of the continuing series of willisters, to allow	

Our Cover:

This time we feature a Rutherford Flag bottle: The Lion Rampant. The Royal Flag of Scotland should, strictly speaking, only be flown by the monarch in her role of Queen of Scotland. The origins of the red rampant lion on a yellow background go back to the banner of William the Lion, King of Scotland from 1165 to 1214. Flying the Lion Rampant without permission is, in theory, still punishable by execution. The bottle contains 5cl of 40% vol. Scotch Malt Whisky.

FROM THE EDITOR:

It's the end of a decade and that in itself is a reason to celebrate. However, this is the end of three decades for us as this number 176 finishes thirty years of publishing the M B C. Your next issue then will begin year thirty-one and our fourth decade. Let's put it this way...we ain't in it for the short haul.

Last time in the Letters to the Editor there was one letter which asked about a special tequila issue. I don't know if we'll be able to do one or not, but my feeling is that we will have enough material. We here in Southern California are very fortunate in that a great many tequila brands are imported and we see miniatures of the majority of those brands. And as if that weren't enough, we're near to Baja California to chase down there to see what's new every so often. Tijuana and Ensenada may often yield some real prizes. For those fortunate enough to get down to Los Cabos, a good many of the more fancy bottles will be found. So we'll work on it and possibly have a special tequila issue. In fact, if you have some special bottles you'd like to write an article about, just let us know. (That's true for any category of liquor!)

Another point from last time had to do with trying to find out what miniatures are available in your area that might not be on your local store's shelves. Taking my own advice, I looked at a list from a new wholesaler in the state. Often I'll find one or maybe two bottles this year; however, this time I hit the jackpot. There were six

tequilas, three rums, and two scotches that I'd never seen before. Of course that means you'll be seeing them here very shortly. But once again, take the opportunity to find out what just might be out there.

One bottle that seems to never be on any wholesale list but is sought by every collector is the Remy Martin Louis XIII Baccarat, You know, the one with all the little glass spires on the sides. This brand is brought into the US by Remy Amerique in New York and then various wholesalers handle it throughout the US.

Recently a few of these bottles turned up here in the Los Angeles area and went to three or four different stores. They were sold at approximately \$225 with tax...and they disappeared immediately. Recently I bumped into the main salesman for Remy Martin here and asked if any more of the bottles would be available as so many collectors still want it.

The answer was yes...and here's why. It seems a local fellow was getting married in November. He wanted a nice favor to give to the guests at his wedding. Since he's always liked the large bottle, he inquired if a miniature available. If there was he wanted to order 200 of them to use as the favors. Since this was a \$45,000 order, the salesman was only too happy to oblige. And since 200 were coming, a few more could be added in for the stores. So, fellow collectors, if you start seeing lots of Louis XIII bottles on e-bay, you'll know where they came from.

We'll give you a moment to get your breath and then wish you Happy Holidays. See you in '04.

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WHAT'S NEW





To finish up the year, we have a baker's dozen plus one...which is a convoluted way of saying there are fourteen new bottles for you this time. Of those fourteen, only four are not found in the U.S.

So let's begin with those. The ceramic in the group is a big brown coffee bean named Gran Kafa Licor and it's from Peru. This was found at the MMBC show this past April. The Mazatan is a plastic tequila currently only found in New Zealand.

The bottle with the Cyrillic lettering is translated as Posolskaya and naturally it's a vodka. It's glass, not plastic, and you'll have to have a friend in the Ukraine to get it. The last of the four "foreigners" is

Xtabentun which sports a marvelous label and comes in that tall, narrow bottle. Vic Visalli found this one on vacation this summer and you must know where he went. What country has words that start with "X"? Hint, it's rather nearby.

For those bottles found here, let's get the two plastics out of the way first. Actually I could say four plastics if all of them were shown. You're seeing only one of the new Skyy flavors. Besides Vanilla, there is also Berry and Spice. Margaritaville is a reincarnation of the nice old glass bottle which you might still be able to find in a few stores. Both bottles have nationwide distribution













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Two nicely done bottles and labels from Italy which are available here in California are the Villa Massa Crema di Limoni and Crema di Mandarini or lemon and orange creams. And while were on the subject of lemon, take a look at the Flor de Cana Limon (lemon rum) from Venezuela. This is a nice frosted bottle.

Our other ceramic this time also came from the MMBC show and it isn't difficult to figure out what it is. The club does a yearly bottle which is sold at the show and they make a much nicer presentation than the glass bottles which used to be





produced.

Now we have the last four bottles and they are all rather special. The Vox Raspberry Vodka is the same Vox bottle as previously, but that is an extremely well done bottle and exact replica of the larger bottle for those of you who really enjoy that aspect of collecting. Our other Vodka here is the Charbay which is handmade vodka from Napa Valley. You may be familiar with the four flavored Charbay vodkas, but this one was found only at one store in Napa. Since the flavored vodkas have fairly wide distribution, it is interesting as to why this bottle has almost no availability. It's frosted glass with 100ml contents

At the same store where the Charbay was found, the Mondavi Luce ("lou-chay") made its appearance. As you can see, it is a very nice package: elegant bottle, wood stopper and tube. It's a grappa made by Mondavi, Jacopo Poli, and Frescobaldi.

You can't get much nicer than that, but the Magellan Gin surely tries. This is another window pane type bottle and is rolling out nationally now so watch for it. This is a pet project of the Southern Wholesale House which is found in a good many states. It's a winner!!

Since it's always nice to end on a high note...we'll see you next year!

-- DMS--

TEQUILA



Tequila seems to be the one spirit which continually may be found in more and better done presentations. (See the Asombroso article in our center spread). Unfortunately, too few of these bottles make it out of Mexico.

Of the twelve shown here, only three are currently found in the U.S. These three are El Grito and the pair of Mico bottles. The El Grito is a very attractive bottle in cobalt blue glass with a silk screen label. It was found in Missouri. The pair of Mico bottles (Gold and Silver) is available here in California, or at least the gold is. The silver seems to have disappeared everywhere. Mico is a second label for Patron and the bottles themselves are exact replicas

of the larger bottles.

Actually of the nine remaining bottles, one is "sort of" available here. The Buen Amigo Blanco may be found in many areas; however, it is a dark plastic bottle, not this much nicer glass one found in Mexico. Batallon Blanco is another rather plain glass bottle but with a very colorful label. The name is the same as our battalion.

Next we come to the El Toril Blanco and Reposado. Don't know if there is a third bottle or not but the bull on this label is certainly emblematic of Mexico. Now we have a very nice set of three, the El Mante bottles. Blanco, reposado and anejo are all represented. Each bottle is a different color so this set really adds a

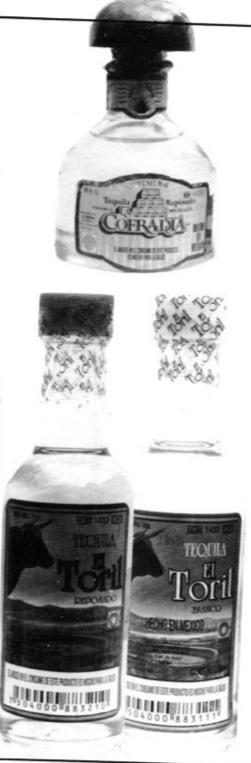






rainbow of brightness to your shelves. Number eleven is the Cofradia Reposado. Not only is it a slightly different shape and has a wood stopper, it also contains 90ml. I have a problem with some of the contentamounts of Mexican bottles. This is the first 90ml bottle I've ever seen. Of course, I have one which is 49ml which is even stranger. Why not add in that silly ml to make a 50ml bottle which could then have the possibility of being sold in the U.S?

Saving the best for last is the Don Fernando. This is a heavy blown glass bottle with applied glass handle. It also sports a metallic label. I have been told that only twelve of these were made as samples and they were too expensive to produce so the company dropped the idea. If so, that is surely too bad. This is an outstanding bottle...unfortunately I'll never be able to see if the tequila inside is as outstanding!



MINI WORLD



It is always our intention to bring you the best, the most interesting, etc., etc. This time we'll add the word weirdest. These two Highwaymen were found in Germany a couple of years ago by a non-collector who bought them because they were the ugliest things she'd ever seen.

The ceramic bodies are all in green and are exactly the same. He points his two guns at you. It is with the two different heads that the words weird, strange and downright bizarre come to mind. You'll notice above I said "ceramic bodies" because the heads are made of <u>rubber</u>. So we have a first, rubber figural heads which fit over the top of the bottles. They both contain Halb Bitter which is a semibitter liqueur often used as a digestive. Oh well, it takes all kinds.







I have five super whiskies for you this time all from the 1930's. The first two shown are very rare and not found in many collections. I would love to have either one or both in my collection.

The first of this marvelous pair is Old Cellar Straight Whiskey. This clear flask is filled with 100 proof whiskey and was produced in Louisville, Kentucky. The label is gold with a picture of a cellar in the center. The second bottle is one of the elusive California whiskies. The Ye Old Bar Favorite Brand Straight Whiskey was bottled for the American Cut Rate Drug Co., 460 S. Main, Los Angeles, Cal. The label shows a man tending bar. You have to agree this is one of the more colorful labels from the Thirties.

The next three are all the thin hip flasks; each about 5.25 inches tall. First is the Captain John Smith





Straight Whiskey. The bottle is filled with 1 ½ ozs. Of 90 proof whiskey and was prepared by Lionel Distilled Products Inc. of Chicago, Illinois.

Next is the Daniel Webster Straight Bourbon Whiskey. The bottle contains 1.5 ozs of 100 proof bourbon whiskey. The mini has a gold foil label that is aged. This miniature was prepared by the Paramount Liquor Company, Chicago, Illinois.

Now, I've saved the best for last. I obtained this at an antique show in Denver, Colorado in 1989. This miniature is The" Old Buckly Ben" Brand blended Whiskey. The bottle contains 1 ½ ozs of 90 proof whiskey. The label is colorful and shows a cowboy on a bucking bronco. This was also distilled by Lionel Distilled Products Inc., Chicago, Illinois.

'Til next time.

-B J.-



MELO'S MINIS

by MIKE OLSON





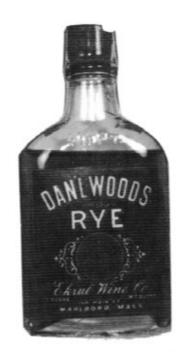
OK, more pre-pro's as promised. One of the interesting things about the old whiskeys is that they came in a wide variety of bottle shapes and sizes. Also, the labels used on these bottles ranged from extremely plain to gorgeous full color. I think this is part of their charm and makes some of them unique works of art. There is even one that makes me drool (not to mention almost wet my pants). Over the years I have had very few prepro's on my most wanted list. I remember seeing a black and white photo of a Quaker Maid bottle and then to see it in color totally blew me awav.

'Nuf said, let's get to these little devils. We lead off with Golden Hill Rye Whiskey in a short rectangular bottle. It was distributed by The Star Liquor Co. of Zanesville O. and has a white label with red, gold and black printing. The next bottle is Three Crown Very Old Rye in a tall thin flask. It has a black label printed in red and gold and the distiller, Geo. Cohn \$ Co. Louisville, KY is embossed on the back.

The next pair are standard flat bottles. The Old Ripy is well known and no, this is not one of the twelve which sold as a group on the internet. The Dan'l Woods Rye is from the Ekrub Wine Co. of Marlboro Mass and has a dark red label.

We turn to a more familiar name now, Geo A Dickel's Cascade Whiskey from Nashville Tenn. It's kind of neat in that it has a tear strip for breaking the lead foil seal which is still intact. It has a dull gold/copper





colored label which is similar to those Dickel used after repeal.

The Mellwood is from Louisville, Ky and was one of National Distillers brands after the end of prohibition. The Anderson Pure Rye was BIB 1892-1899 and looks brand new! This is because it was sealed in its original cardboard shipping tube until I opened it in 2002. The Crystal Springs Whiskey is a true work of art. It has a green label and a small multicolored waterfall in the center of the label.

The Quaker Maid Whiskey is, in my opinion, one of the best looking miniature bottles ever made...bar none. It is from S. Hirsch Distilling Co. of Kansas City and has the maker embossed on the back of the bottle. It features a full color portrait with gold

and red accents and should be viewed in color. It is also one of the very few pre-pro's to have capacity (one tenth pint) and proof (90) printed on the front label. The last bottle is Woodford Co. Ky. Sour Mash and is just about as plain as they come. What a comparison between the two.

Finally, on the day I photographed these bottles, I received a package containing a pre-pro. I was not expecting much because in the internet photo the label looked puckered and damaged. Well, it turned out to be a Manhattan Club Whiskey on an eight sided bottle with a label guaranteed to make you (deleted).

Until next time. . . . MELO





DELFT



Last time there were two short articles on Dutch bottles. One showed three from a set of six delft pieces while the other pictured two houses which had not been painted.

To somewhat finish off last time here are two more pieces. One is the fourth bottle from the set of six delft buildings while the other is actually an unpainted KLM house, number 18. This is one of the original houses made in Holland (not from the company store) and is quite an interesting variation as it escaped quality control and ended up in a collection almost thirty years ago.



MEET THE COLLECTOR:



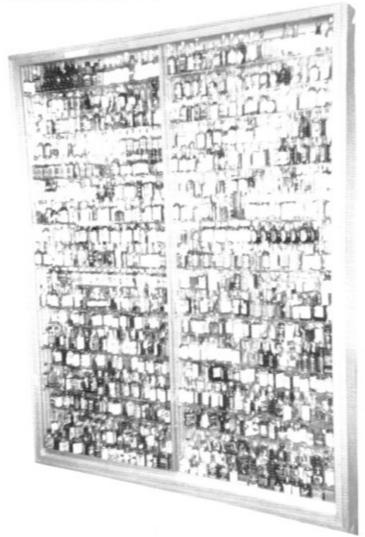
Welcome Jim Nunnelly of East Point, Georgia, our Collector of the Month (guess that should be quarter now). Jim has been involved with our favorite hobby for over a score of years, but let's let him tell it in his own words:

"I casually started collecting mini bottles from airline flights whenever I got those free Eastern Airline 'upgrades'. I had amassed a nice little collection of those and then in the mid-'80's, 1983 and 1984 to be exact, we took a vacation to Europe and my collecting became much more serious.

"After the European vacation, I found Foremost Liquors on Manheim Road in Chicago. I remember how elated I was when I found a green label Jack Daniels there. Anyway from what I've heard, many collectors came to the Midwest mini shows and found out about Foremost Liquors. Well, I went to Foremost and found out about the MMBC.

"Down through the years my collecting interests seem to have stayed the same. My favorite bottles are still American whiskeys (sour mash, straights, blends, and ryes). At last count I had about 1300 of these

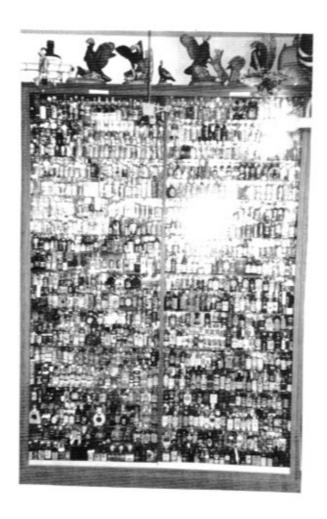
JIM NUNNELLY



However, the collection also includes about 1000 rums (some with beautiful labels that I love. So it's American whiskeys and rums, but then there happen to be another 6,000 or so plus figurals. Unfortunately I have the same problem many collectors face,

display space. This means all of my 2200 liqueurs and 500 wines are currently boxed and in the storage room.

"I've always been a general collector, with occasional serious side flourishes into Inca Piscos, single



malt scotch. Grand Marnier variations, Kahlua variations, etc. My best find was a collection of 100 whiskeys and 100 'others' from a store in Dania, Florida, back in 1988. The owner it seems had purchased a collection twenty years earlier and in the store's back storage room I was the first to open the boxes to see all of those minis with their Illinois dated tax stamps from the 1930's. We haggled long and hard and finally settled on \$350 per 100 minis. That's

how my collection really got its value boost and I got the bottles with the cigarette labels, the boxer labels, and many other old 'goodies'."

As with many of us who have the collecting bug, Jim also collects Kaiser Porcelains, turn-of-the-century soapstone carvings, Lionel trains, western books, and coins...which he says have been pretty well neglected recently.

You can say hi to Jim next year at the MMBC show in St. Louis.

AsomBroso

We normally put all the new bottles in the What's New column which starts each issue. However, we recently became aware of a new tequila that demanded more than a cursory look. As you'll see, this is not your ordinary straight glass tequila.

ASOMBROSO (translated as "amazing" in English) is the initial release from California Tequila LLC, a spirits import and distribution company. This incredible 50ml bottle (and its larger 750ml size) will be available at just the same time you're reading this.

AsomBroso is the brainchild of local entrepreneur Rick Gamarra who is better known as the owner of South Bay Studios and Focus on Cars, two mainstays of the import and domestic automotive advertising support industry located in Southern California.

When asked how he got into the tequila business, Rick answered, "I'm really not a tequila drinker, but when I first tasted the AsomBroso Aneio on a trip to Mexico, I thought I was sipping a fine cognac and I was mesmerized." Rick then looked to purchase some to take home to share with his friends and family, but found that it was only a locally available delicacy based upon an old family recipe. Captivated by the taste and spurred on by the challenge, he sought out the tequilery and talked distribution into а owners the

agreement...promising to keep the quantity small and exclusive...and the quality high and repeatable.

As befitting a taste fit for Aztec Royalty, AsomBroso is packaged in a uniquely-shaped hand-blown glass bottle patterned after a decanter found in a European castle dating to the 18th century. Each bottle is hand numbered and is one of a specific collector series. It may also be purchased packed inside a specially designed humidor...replete with glass inlaid lid and cedar lining.

After the initial launch of the Anejo, the El Platino will soon arrive. This is a non-anejo tequila with a definite attitude, taste, and quality at a higher level than your normal "silver" tequilas; hence the "platinum" name. Other flavors which will soon be available will be the AsomBroso 'del Porto' which is the anejo additionally aged in port wine barrels and then 'El Carbonzado'. anejo aged Tennessee Whiskey barrels. You'll be happy to know that each of these will be available as a miniature and different colored glass will act as a differentiation among them.

If you want to find out more, go to the AsomBroso website: www.californiatequila.com And now that we've whetted your appetite, please turn the page to see the complete line of bottles in full color.

100% de Agave, d

The Worlds Most Exclusive Tequila

ANEJO

AsomBroso ANEJO taste evokes an image of raw sophistication... with a smooth palate, and a firm but never bitter finish... ahhhhh.





DEL PORTO

AsomBroso DEL PORTO is a great aperitif or a natural after dinner liqueur and goes well with a fine cigar and a roaring fireplace





EL CARBONZADO

AsomBroso EL CARBONZADO goes well with a "charred on the outside red on the inside" steak, or a bag of "in the shell" peanuts you decide... and enjoy





EL PLATINO

AsomBroso EL PLATINO is perfect for mixing or as a straight shot with salt and a lime... but go easy on the salt and lime, you'll want to savor the taste





RUM



Back to the Caribbean we go for a look at bottles which (with one exception) aren't found away from their respective islands. Let's look at the exception first.

This is the Admiral Nelson's Coconut Rum. The new coconut flavor is one of several that have appeared recently throughout the U.S. from the Admiral Nelson Company. Naturally it's a PET and quite inexpensive.

The island of St. Lucia provides three rums for us. These are the two Crystal from the Bounty Company (old and new labels) and the provocatively labeled Kweyol Spiced Rum with the nude girl on the label. Of course this label alone precludes the bottle from being sold here because the ATF would never approve. (Sorry that the label's so dark...but maybe with a magnifying glass, guys......)



Barbados gives us two rather interesting bottles, the Crisma Rum Cream (which is very tasty) and the Malibu Lime. We all are familiar with Malibu but this new lime flavor hasn't made it here yet.

Finally from St. Martin (on the French side) is the tall, 100ml bottle with the hand-painted label and cork stopper. This is a product from Ma Doudou and it's a Punch au Rhum with the guava berry non-rum primary the being hand-painted The ingredient. beauty is shown with a guava between her hands. A pity this one isn't in color.

So a short look at some recent Caribbean bottles.



Ski ** Country



We've recently shown you the set of Hawaiian bottles and previous to that the dolphins and Statue of Liberty. However, with this new release you can certainly say that Ski Country has returned to its roots in producing excellent animal bottles.

You're looking at the Elk and the Wolf which was produced in very limited quantities (we'll try to have the exact number for you next time) in miniature and is an exact replica of the larger bottle.

With ceramics the more intricate the design the more the piece is liable to break, thus most companies very seldom did pieces with protruding arms and/or legs. Well, look at this Elk. Not only is his front leg out in front of him and unsupported, but his rack of antlers is positively amazing. Mind that you are extremely careful with this piece.

Everyone who attended the first convention this year in Colorado came away with a very positive experience. There were a number of very special bottles on display and if you're a figural collector, Ski Country is one of the very few companies anywhere in the world still producing ceramic decanters. The next convention will be in the summer of 2005.

Once again we include the check list of the original 175 pieces. How many do you have?

Guide

		123. RUFFED GROUSE
The second secon	62. BROWN PELICAN	124. MALLARD 1981
I. MAJESTIC EAGLE	63. IVORY-BILLED WOODPECKER	125. BOBCAT
2. SNOWY OWL	64 PHEASANT	126. BADGER
3. PEACOCK	65 CARDINAL	127. BARRED OWL PLAQUE
4. GILA WOODPECKER	66. HAWK EAGLE	128. PRAIRIE FALCON
5. RED-SHOULDERED HAWK	67. TROUT #2	129. MERGANSER
6. RAM	48 END OF THE TRAIL	130. BALD EAGLE
7. LEADVILLE LADIES	60 NORTH AMERICAN INDIANS (0)	(aka EAGLE ON WATER)
9. CALIFORNIA CONDOK	75 LAND-LOCKED SALMON	(aka EAGLE ON WATER) 131. WOLF DANCER
10. GOLDEN EAGLE	76 DRUM FAGLE	132. PHOENIX BIRD
(aka MOUNTAIN EAGLE)	77 MALLARD DUCK FAMIL 1	133. CANVASBACK DUCK
11. MALLARD DUCK	78 KING FIDER DUCK	134. CHICADEES
12 CANADA GOOSE	70 MISKIE	134. GHICADEES 135. MT. SHEEP
13. PEACE DOVE 14. COLORADO BURRO	80 SCREECHOWL FAMIL 1	136. STONE SHEEP
15. ELEPHANT ON A DRUM	81 RED TAILED HAWK	137. WHITE-TAIL DEER
16. POX ON A LOG	82 WHITE FALCON	138. FIGHTING GAMECOCKS
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10 MOUNTAIN LION	85 FIGHTING PHEASANTS	141. BARREL RACER
20. GREAT GREY KANGAROO	86 SAW WHET OWL	142 BUFFALO STAMPEDE
21. OREGON CAVEMAN	87. BALTIMORE ORIOLE	143. RINGNECKED PHEASANT
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22 CLANDE	89. RED-WINGED BLACKBIRD	145. DUCKS UNLIMITED
23. CLYDE 24. AUSTRALIAN BLACK SWAN	OO BASSETT HOUND	WOOD DUCK
25. RED-HEADED DUCK	91. PENGUIN FAMILY	146 ANTEL OPE DANCER
25. RED-HEADED DOCK	92. COYOTE FAMILY	147. PASSENGER PIGEON
27 SACEGROUNE	93 COYOTE FAMILY	148. JAGUAR
28. GREAT HORNED OWL	04 SKTINK FAMILY	149. GYRFALCON
29. BONNIE	95 MRS CRATCHIT	150. SQUIRREL PLAQUE
30 TOM THUMB	96 PIN TAIL DUCK	151. WHOOPING CRANE
31. (NDIAN DANCERS (0)	97 LOOKOUT INDIAN	152 MALE MERGANSER
37 RACCOON	98. BLACK LABRADOK	153. GREEN-WINGED TEAL
38. WOOD DUCK	99. SNOW LEOPARD	154. FALCON DANCER
39. SKIER (red)	100. CHUKKAR PARTRIDGE	155. FOX & BUTTERFLY
an SKIER (blue)	101. INDIAN CHIEF #1	156. THE SURVIVOR
41 TIGER ON A BALL	102. INDIAN CHIEF #2	157 BITTERIRD PLAQUE
42 LION ON A DRUM	103. SCROOGE	158 MOUNTAIN GOAT FAMILY
43. JENNY LIND (500c)	104. SCISSOR-TAILED FLYCATCHER	150 POLAR BEAR
A RECEVITION (Velice)	105. POX FAMILY	160. GOLDEN PHEASANT
45. CIGAR STORE INDIAN	106. GREAT SPIRIT	161. RAINBOW DANCER
AS WILD II KKET	107. WYOMING BRONCO	162 SEAGULL PLAQUE
42 CONNECTICUT ROBIN	108. PEREGRINE FALCON	163 OGREY FAMILY (2)
48. MOUNTAIN GOAT	109. WIDGEON	165 MALE BUTTET FHEAD DUCK
49. LIPIZZAN	110. NEAR MISS	166 BI UE-WINGED TEAL
50 PALOMINO	111. RIVER OTTER	167 (TEDAR WAXWINGS
BABY SNOWY OWL</td <td>112. EAGLE DANCER</td> <td>168. ALASKAN WALRUS</td>	112. EAGLE DANCER	168. ALASKAN WALRUS
52 Bt ACK, ROOTED FERREL	113 U.S. SKI TEAM	160 KESTRAL PLADUE
53 BITTE-WINGED TEAL	114. CANADA GOOSE FAMILY	170. BASKET DANCER
54 BROWN TROUT	115. ELK	171. BURROWING OWLS
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SO BIRTH OF FREEDOM	120. EASTER SEAL EAGLE	
60 PRAIRIE CHICKEN	121. DALL SHEEP	
61. SUBMARINE	122. DESERT SHEEP	
_ 01.0000000		

VODKA

by JOHN SULLIVAN



About a year ago, a friend brought me back some mini vodka bottles from the Ukraine. One of them was a nice little bottle called KAZENKA and it a picture of the famous Russian Hammer and Sickle on the label. In February of 2003, the same friend returned from another trip to the Ukraine and brought me back some more mini vodka bottles. This time there were five new Kazenka mini bottles with interesting pictures on the labels. And each bottle had a year printed on the side of the label. One of the bottles had a picture of Yuri the famous Gagarin, cosmonaut, and the year 1961 printed

on the label. I realized quickly that the picture on the label and the year must have something in common. I didn't understand the relationship between the pictures and the years printed on the labels of the other four bottles. I also wondered why they happened to pick those five years to print labels for their bottles.

As luck would have it, I had an opportunity to visit Kiev, Ukraine in May of 2003 for business. I made it a point to look for some more of those five neat Kazenka bottles with the great pictures on the labels. I asked my friend where he had found them and I went to visit that place. I saw



four of the packages of five bottles each sitting on the shelf and I asked the lady for one of the packages. While I was waiting to pay, I opened the package and quickly noticed that there were five different bottles in that package. I immediately asked her for the other three packages and there were about six different labels among those fifteen bottles. I asked the lady if there were any more of those sets in stock and she said no.

I was really starting to get excited now because I could see that there was a good possibility that there could be a lot of mini vodka bottles in this set. I inquired about where some other stores were that sold these kinds of bottles. I also knew of some myself from my previous visits to Kiev. I then ended up visiting four more stores and buying about 120 mini vodka bottles. I now had about thirty different bottles.

I next asked my distributor if he knew where this company that made located. these bottles was the knew he that responded neighborhood where they located so we were off in a taxi to the address on the bottles. We walked un and down the block on both sides of the street looking for a big factory that made distilled spirits. couldn't see any factories at all or even anything that remotely looked like a factory. I became disappointed as I felt sure we wouldn't find it. However, thanks to my distributor who understood things much better than I did, we were pointed the way to a building down the street after asking just a few questions of local residents. We walked there to find a guy smoking a cigarette in front of the building. When my distributor asked him if he knew of the company, he smiled and said, "Yes, you have



found it. This is the right place!"

He invited us inside what looked like a ground floor apartment. There were no signs or anything else indicating that this was the company we were looking for. Inside there were two rooms and the one we were in had a counter. Behind the counter were some shelves and on those shelves there were some 750ml bottles and some of the mini Kazenka vodka bottles. It turned out that this was just a distribution office in Kiev for Kazenka. They do not make anything at this place; they just sell it. The bottles are packaged in cardboard packages of five bottles and also in wooden cases of twenty bottles. AND, there is neither rhyme nor reason to the way they package the bottles. You may find three of one year in a package of five or you may find five different years. That is why I had to buy so many bottles in the shops to find any new ones. I bought all they had in all the stores I visited,

including packages of five and boxes of twenty.

We asked him if he had more of the miniature bottles and he said yes. He proceeded to bring out some boxes of about 50 mini Kazenkas in each box. These were not boxes that were available for retail sale like the packages of five or boxes of twenty. These were boxes sent from the factory to this store for sale individually. I started to go through the boxes and fortunately I had made a list of all the years I had purchased after visiting the stores that afternoon.

I pretty much knew what I was looking for by the time I got to this factory store. There I found about thirteen more bottles. I now had 43 different years with different labels. I even bought some duplicates for trading back home so at the end of the day, I had 200 Kazenka mini vodka bottles in my possession with 43 different labels. I also got a lot of information from the guy as well.

They had only made 43 labels on the first production, but planned to finish the job in about a month with the rest of the labels. The plan was to make a mini bottle with a different label for each year of the communist government in Russia. That meant 1917 through 1991 or a total of 75 different bottles. All of the bottles are now in production and available for purchase.

Well......that's sort of how it turned out. With a logic that only they can understand, they did not produce a bottle for the year 1983 but they did two bottles for the year 1945...thus 75 labels. However, they also did an extra bottle without a year on the label. This was a Stolichnaya mini. That means that with the first Kazenka bottle with the hammer and Sickle, the 75 bottles with years printed on the label, and the

Stolichnaya bottle, Kazenka has produced a total of 77 mini vodka bottles.

As a vodka collector, this is absolutely one of the greatest mini vodka sets I have ever seen. I cannot believe that these bottles will be around for long, so I encourage any of you who are interested in them to do what you can to get them for your collections as soon as you can. You we site: my visit can see www.minivodkaguy.com some of these great bottles for yourself. There are a few years shown here but they should be seen in color. Go to the end of the "K" pages in the vodka section and you will see them listed. I don't have them all listed yet, but you will be able to see at lest half of them and a majority of the beautiful labels which are on the -J.S.bottles.

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Habanero (from Mexico) by Harry Ford



Habañero - As the back label on the first bottle on the left says - A combination of old Spanish sherry and Mexican sugar cane brandy. Exquiste and absolutely Unrivalled harmless. for and cocktails, punches appetizers. It is better than whiskey as good as the best cognac. This narrow flask (like the very old Tequilas) has a foil top with the traditional red, white, and green colors. The gold label with blue letters features a nice cannon for San Juan Bautista, Tabasco.

The second bottle shows the connection with many old rum bottles. This bottle is in a cognac style bottle with a kick up, and a cork and red foil top. Habanero Babuco has a parrot, and man serving Habanero.

The third bottle on the right is also a beautiful narrow flask with a red foil top. The Tenampa Habanero indicates that premeried at an industrial exposition in Rome in 1923. Many folks will also think of this as that great pepper that spices up your food. This Tenampa is from the same named hacienda in Veracruz, In 1923, the cantina Salón Tenampa in Mexico City opened on what is now Plaza Garibaldi, where the mariachis of Concho Andrade and Cirilo Marmolejo performed. Tenampa soon became Mexico City's center of mariachi activity and attracted groups from rural areas to the plaza. It is also a bar decorated in typical Mexican style.



The La Palma Habanero on the left is a fabulous molded bottle. It has a large palm tree and Palma and some palm leaves on the back, and embossed rectangles on the other three sides. The red cap also has a green palm tree. The yellow label also has a palm tree scene.

The Habanero Superior Especial Extra El Canon is in a great wicker cover over glass, like some tequila's. This is 73 proof and 2 oz. It has a 1930's Maryland tax stamp and was imported by Corydon & Ohlrich, Inc., Chicago USA. It also has a red, white and green ribbon. The label says "Casa establecida en San Jan Bautista el ano 1884.

The Habanero Faro is another fabulous embossed glass bottle with crosses on the front and corners and Bodegas California, S.A. Mexico, D.F. on the back. It has a red foil top. The picture shows the sugar cane and a steamship heading towards the lighthouse in CALIFORNIA. The Bodegas de San Tomas in Baja California is the oldest winery founded in 1888.

The last bottle on the right is Habanero anejo Berreteaaga, also from San Juan Bautista de Tabasco. This also has a green, white and red foil cap. The back label says; Berreteaga, No headache, no aftertaste, sugar cane brandy from Mexico, Aged in Wood.

Good Bottle Hunting!

Harry Ford

THREE MINI-JUGS with PEDIGREES

by JACK SULLIVAN





Relatively few American mini-jugs have pottery marks of any kind, thus identifying a maker is always a special occasion. Here are three small jugs from the pre-Prohibition era that continue to have uncommon interest in part because their origins are known.

The first jug is from Brookfield Rare Old Perfection Rye in a canteen shape with a deep rich brown glaze. Brookfield Rye was a brand name from the George Bieler Distillery of Cincinnati, Ohio. This was the firm's flagship brand and the Bieler family, father and sons in the business, were known as the Brookfield Rye Men.

Although this mini-jug has no pottery mark on it, catalog and other evidence point directly at its having been made by the Western Stoneware Company. This outfit was located in Macomb, Illinois. It was created in 1906 from the merger of seven smaller potteries in the Midwest and went on to become one of the largest and, for years, most successful makers of a wide range of ceramic articles, including whiskey jugs. After almost 80 years of continuous operation, the plant closed in 1985, victim of cheaper imports from overseas.

The second item, a half-pint, is distinctive by having a paper label announcing that it is RAINBOW Straight Rye Whiskey. It is two toned stoneware, with a dark glaze type and saltglaze bottom. The picture on the label is of a rural homestead with a rainbow overhead. The label says the whiskey was bottled by the American



Liquor Company of Boston, Mass.

The pottery mark is for Macomb Stoneware of Macomb, Illinois. This firm was noted for making all kinds of utilitarian stoneware pieces, including jugs and crocks. After becoming Plant 3 of Western Stoneware, the pottery burned down in 1913 and was not rebuilt. Despite a short life span, Macomb Stoneware attracts considerable collector interest even today.

Our third oldie is from St. Paul, Minnesota: Oldays Pure Rye from George Benz & Sons of St. Paul. Benz was a German immigrant who arrived in the U.S. with just about the shirt on his back and became a major restaurant-owner and distiller in the North Land. He and his sons whiskey making lasted from 1887

until Prohibition. Benz liked fancy jugs and bottles to contain his many liquor brands.

To make the saltglazed stoneware selected he shown here. Sherwood Bros. Pottery of New Brighton, Pennsylvania. The firm well-designed specialized in underglazed decorative labels. The jug also has a distinctive ceramic top that has screw threads that fit exactly inside the neck of the mini-jug. The feature is a definitive characteristic of Sherwood Bros. The pottery was founded in 1879 by W. W. and W. D. Sherwood. By 1895 they employed 140 people making stoneware. Their operations, hit hard by the loss of whiskey business during Prohibition, lasted until about 1936.

--J.S.--

from

NEW ZEALAND



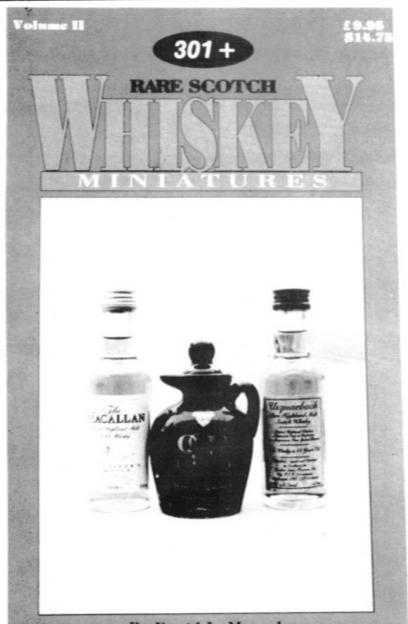
This is now part three of our continuing look at all the new bottles found in New Zealand. Several collectors have wondered why these bottles have not been filled with New Zealand whisky. Unfortunately there appears to be no whisky being produced in New Zealand. What was the Wilson Distillery was demolished in 2002. There is still stock of whisky produced prior to that which may be

found with at least two different labels. When those bottles are gone though, there will be no New Zealand whisky. A shame to the say the least.

Of course along with the whisky, there are the rums, vodkas and bourbons. This time four different sites are commemorated and with two of those you can see the entire range of the four different bottlings. Something for every collector.







By David L. Maund

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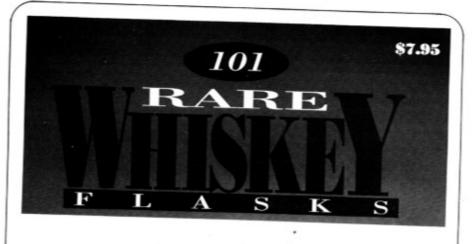
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